

Message Text

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ORIGIN IO-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ARA-10 EUR-12 EA-07 NEA-10 ISO-00
SIG-01 MMO-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /112 R

DRAFTED BY IO/UNP:DSCHIELE:RTB
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EUR:AHUGHES
ARA/PPC:POAKLEY
ARA/CAR:RSURBER

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R 010241Z JUL 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY FREETOWN
AMEMBASSY KABUL
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
AMEMBASSY SUVA
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
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AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 153477

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UNGA, UN, RQ

SUBJECT: COMMITTEE OF 24 (C-24) CONSIDERATION OF
PUERTO RICO

REF: STATE 204749 (1976)

1. POSTS WILL RECALL THAT UN COMMITTEE ON DECOLONIZATION, GENERALLY KNOWN AS COMMITTEE OF 24 (C-24), ANNUALLY CONSIDERS THE STATUS OF PUERTO RICO. IN 1975 A MOTION TO CONCLUDE C-24 DISCUSSION OF THE MATTER WITHOUT A VOTE ON A CUBAN SPONSORED RESOLUTION WAS APPROVED 11-9-2, WITH ONE NOT PARTICIPATING AND ONE ABSENT. LAST YEAR A VOTE WAS AVOIDED THROUGH CONSENSUS AGREEMENT TO UPDATE A SECRETARIAT REPORT ON PUERTO RICO AND RESUME DISCUSSION IN 1977.

2. IT IS UNCERTAIN HOW HARD CUBA WILL PUSH THE PUERTO RICO QUESTION IN THE COMMITTEE OF 24 THIS YEAR. THE CUBANS CANNOT BE EXPECTED TO ABANDON THEIR SUPPORT IN THE COMMITTEE FOR PUERTO RICAN INDEPENDENCE, BUT WE UNDERSTAND THEY ARE UNCOMFORTABLE WITH THE ISSUE IN VIEW OF IMPROVING BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH THE US. WE ARE HOPEFUL
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THAT AN AGREEMENT CAN BE WORKED OUT BY WHICH THE COMMITTEE WILL ONCE AGAIN ADJOURN ITS DISCUSSION WITHOUT A VOTE ON

A RESOLUTION.

3. FOR CANBERRA AND OSLO: EMBASSIES SHOULD INFORM FOREIGN MINISTERIES THAT WE EXPECT C-24 CONSIDERATION OF PUERTO RICO IN AUGUST. LAST YEAR THE ASSISTANCE EXTENDED BY THEIR MISSION TO THE UN WAS MOST HELPFUL. USUN IS ALREADY WORKING CLOSELY WITH THE AUSTRALIAN AND NORWEGIAN MISSIONS. NO ACTION IS REQUIRED EXCEPT TO EXPRESS OUR SATISFACTION WITH THE ASSISTANCE WE ARE RECEIVING AND TO ASSURE THE FOREIGN MINISTRY THAT OUR POSITION WITH RESPECT TO C-24 CONSIDERATION OF THE STATUS OF PUERTO RICO HAS NOT CHANGED.

4. OTHER ACTION ADDRESSEES SHOULD DRAW ON TALKING POINTS CONTAINED PARA 5 AND INFORM HOST GOVERNMENTS IN LOW KEY MANNER THAT USG POSITION REGARDING UN CONSIDERATION OF PUERTO RICO STATUS REMAINS UNCHANGED, BUT THAT WE WISH TO AVOID CONFRONTATION IN THE UN OVER THE MATTER. YOU SHOULD ALSO COMMENT, IN GENERAL TERMS,

THAT WE WILL BE WILLING TO RESPOND TO THEIR QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS BILATERALLY EITHER IN CAPITALS OR IN NEW YORK.

5. TALKING POINTS ON C-24 CONSIDERATION OF PUERTO RICO FOLLOW:

-- (WHERE APPROPRIATE) YOU WILL RECALL THAT WE HAVE PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED A FULL EXPOSITION OF OUR VIEWS REGARDING UN CONSIDERATION OF THE STATUS OF PUERTO RICO.

-- WE OPPOSE UN CONSIDERATION OF THE QUESTION BECAUSE THE MATTER IS A DOMESTIC MATTER BETWEEN THE PEOPLE OF PUERTO RICO AND THE UNITED STATES, BUT WE WISH TO AVOID CONFIDENTIAL

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A CONFRONTATION IN THE UN OVER THE MATTER.

-- THE COMMITTEE OF 24 IS NOW EXPECTED TO TAKE UP THE QUESTION IN AUGUST. WE HOPE A WAY WILL BE FOUND TO AVOID A COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION OR RESOLUTION WHICH WE WOULD HAVE TO OPPOSE IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

-- US POLICY ON PUERTO RICO IS BASED ON RECOGNITION OF THE RIGHT OF THE PEOPLE TO SELF-DETERMINATION. PRESIDENT CARTER HAS GIVEN HIS PERSONAL ASSURANCE THAT HE WILL SUPPORT WHATEVER STATUS THE PEOPLE OF PUERTO RICO CHOOSE FOR THEMSELVES.

-- THERE ARE FREE ELECTIONS IN PUERTO RICO EVERY FOUR YEARS. THE MOST RECENT ELECTION WAS HELD ON NOVEMBER 4,

1976, AT WHICH TIME THE INCUMBENT POPULAR DEMOCRATIC PARTY WAS VOTED OUT OF OFFICE, TO BE REPLACED BY THE NEW PROGRESSIVE PARTY. THE TWO PRO-INDEPENDENCE PARTIES WHICH PARTICIPATED IN THE ELECTION RECEIVED A COMBINED TOTAL OF 6 PERCENT OF THE VOTE, ABOUT THE SAME AS IN PREVIOUS ELECTIONS.

-- THE PRESENT STATUS OF PUERTO RICO IS THE RESULT OF AN ACT OF SELF-DETERMINATION BY THE PEOPLE OF THE TERRITORY IN 1952, IN WHICH THEY CHOSE COMMONWEALTH STATUS. THEY REAFFIRMED THIS CHOICE IN A REFERENDUM IN 1967.

-- THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN 1953 EXPLICITLY RECOGNIZED THAT PUERTO RICO HAD ACHIEVED FULL SELF-GOVERNMENT AND AGREED TO THE REMOVAL OF PUERTO RICO FROM THE LIST OF NON-SELF-GOVERNING CONFIDENTIAL

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TERRITORIES. THIS DECISION WAS REAFFIRMED IN 1971 WHEN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY REJECTED AN ATTEMPT TO INSCRIBE AN ITEM ON PUERTO RICO ON ITS AGENDA.

6. FOR ABIDJAN, BAMAKO AND TUNIS: FRENCH TRANSLATION OF TALKING POINTS WILL FOLLOW.

7. PLEASE REPORT RESULTS OF YOUR REPRESENTATIONS INFO USUN.

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Message Attributes

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